

Salt Creek - A Community in Transition

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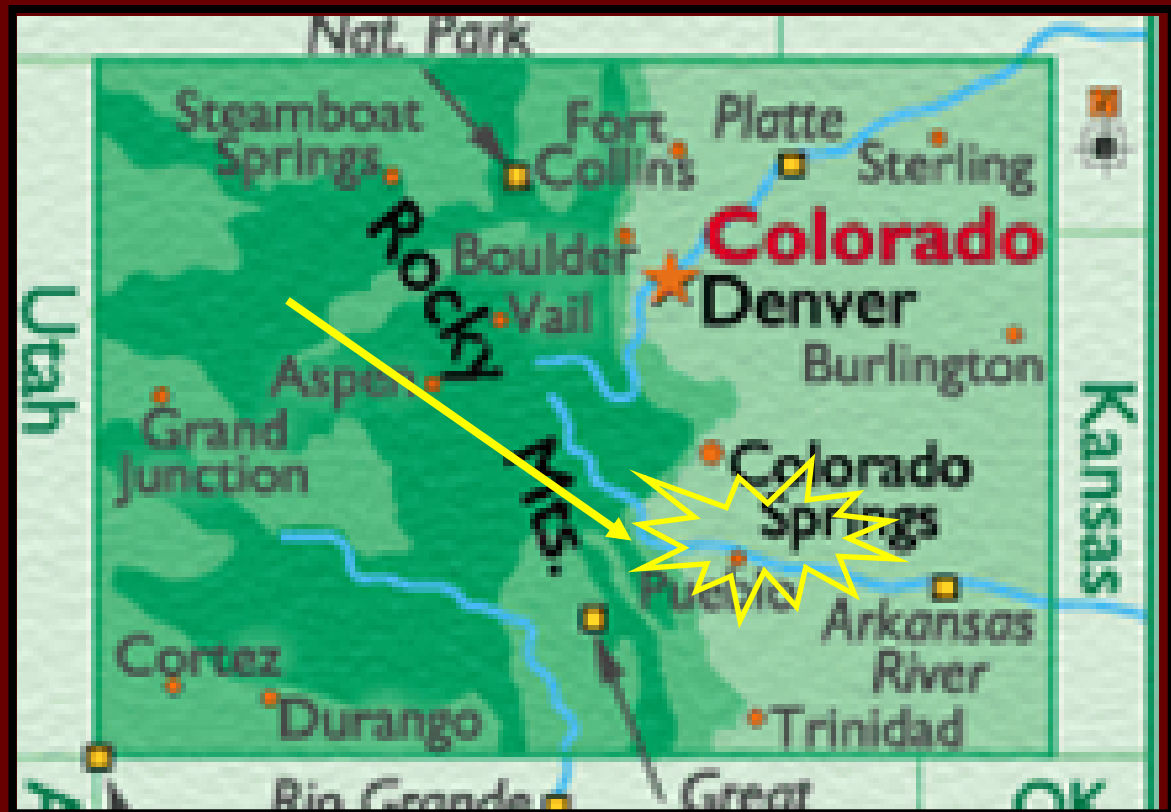
COMMUNITY PROFILE:

Pueblo and

Salt Creek

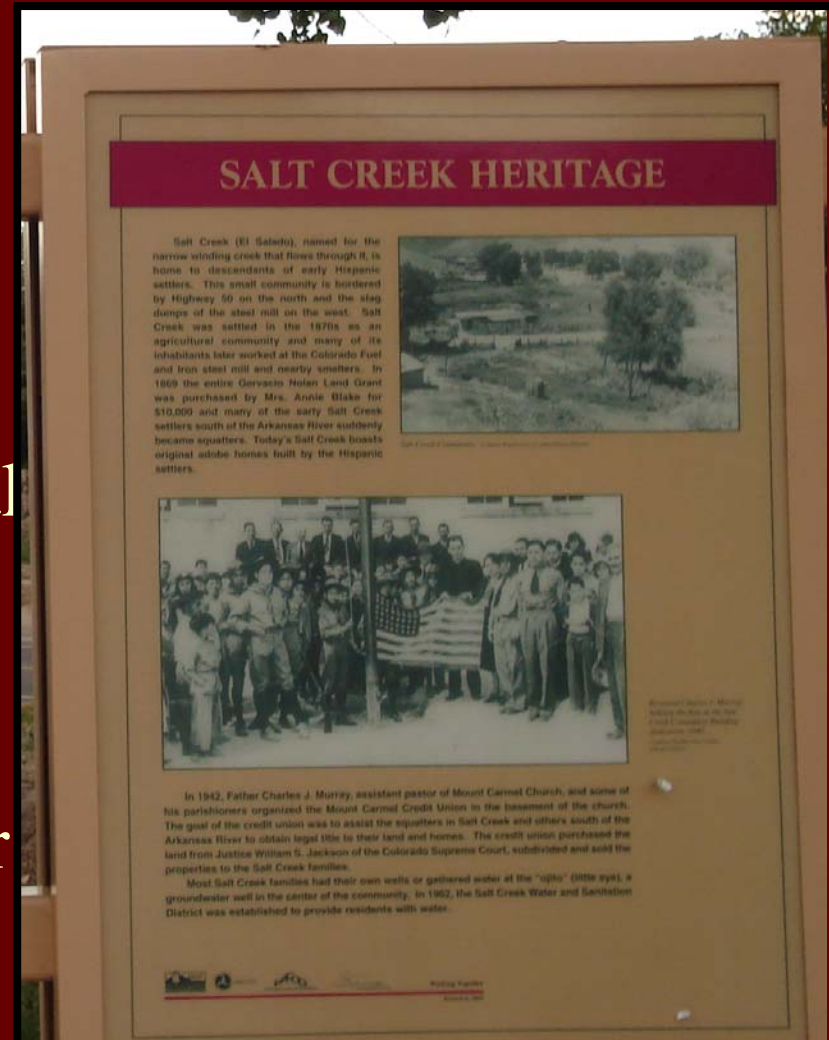


- Population: 102,121
- 44% Latino:
- Median Household
Income: \$29,650
(2000 US Census Data)



Salt Creek Community Profile

- Population 1,000
- 90% Hispanic
- Settled in early 1900's
- Home to new immigrants and several generations of Pueblo Residents
- Closest neighborhood to steel mill and power plant



Key Issues in Pueblo

- Economically stagnant - boom and bust job cycles
- Lack of adequate recycling program
- Distrust among residents of area industries
- Migrant farm worker population needs
- Sewage water overflows from Colorado Springs
- Illegal dumping and litter

Understanding Salt Creek

- Salt Creek is a small community in Pueblo County, Colorado
- The community is becoming increasingly aware of the challenges that exist related to environment, crime, and health.
- US EPA Region 8 Environmental Justice Program has conducted outreach activities in Pueblo since 2002
- In the summer of 2005, special attention was given to promoting Smart Growth in Pueblo, focusing on the community of Salt Creek

Rocky Mountain Steel: View from Salt Creek



Xcel Comanche Coal-Fired Power Plant



Salt Creek Starts to Respond



Dionisio Metal & Iron

View from a
Salt Creek
resident's
backyard of
Dionisio Metal
& Iron





Dionisio Iron
& Metal

Local home
in close
proximity

Area home
in close
proximity
to smelter





How to Engage a Disengaged Community ...

Some Principles -

1. Begin with a focus on a single issue.
2. Seek the channel that is most easily accessed
3. Build capacity among existing parties with resources.
4. Take advantage of current events.
5. Think long term, be patient, celebrate community.

1. FOCUS ON A SINGLE ISSUE:

Recycling

Recycling in Pueblo

- Recycling has been a historically contentious issue in Pueblo
- Curb-side recycling is perceived to be too expensive by many residents and elected officials
- Currently, the only free recycling opportunities are a result of a 3-year grant that is in its last year (2005)

Recycling in Pueblo



Recycling is a simple concept that people of all ages can understand and participate in.

The Cleaning Crew



Recycling aligns with cleaning up neighborhoods and preventing litter- an issue Salt Creek has identified as a priority and is currently addressing.

2. SEEK THE CHANNEL
THAT IS MOST
EASILY ACCESSED:

Children

Salt Creek Kids

- Hispanic cultures value family and youth. With this in mind, outreach was focused on the children of Salt Creek.
- The recycling project helps kids carry their environmental knowledge to adulthood, and also share their knowledge with family members.

Salt Creek Kids Club:

- The timing of Summer 2005 was ideal;
 - The Salt Creek Kids Club was newly formed and in need of activities
 - Environmental education events were welcomed by the kids during summer vacation months
 - Current events in Salt Creek prompted a better understanding of environmental issues

Salt Creek Kids Activities -

Three Kids Club meetings were held,
addressing issues of:

- Recycling
- Storm water
- Litter
- Bicycle Safety
- West Nile Virus
- Conservation
- Reading books about the environment



3. BUILD
COMMUNITY CAPACITY:
Via
Collaboration

Local Capacity Building

- Pueblo City-County Department of Planning and Development- provided GIS maps of Salt Creek
- Pueblo City-County Health Department- provided environmental education services to Salt Creek Kids Club, West Nile Virus educational materials
- Pueblo Police Department- facilitates Salt Creek Neighborhood Watch program, provided bicycle safety course to Salt Creek Kids Club

Local Capacity Building - 2

- Dionisio Metal & Iron- committed to provide a sign and fence for the neighborhood baseball field
- Excel Energy- committed to provide lighting for the neighborhood baseball field
- Pueblo Recycles- Community group working to initiate an organized recycling program in Pueblo
- District Attorney's Office investigates Salt Creek residents complaints



Pueblo City-County
Health Department
Environmental
Coordinator Susan Finzel-
Aldred teaches kids about
recycling

Officer J.C. Williams
discusses Neighborhood
Watch with Salt Creek
residents



Capacity Building

- Salt Creek Community Picnic - Summer 2005

More than 100 residents gathered to celebrate the progress made over the past year in the community. EPA representatives provided games and information for all ages.



4. TAKE ADVANTAGE OF
CURRENT EVENTS:

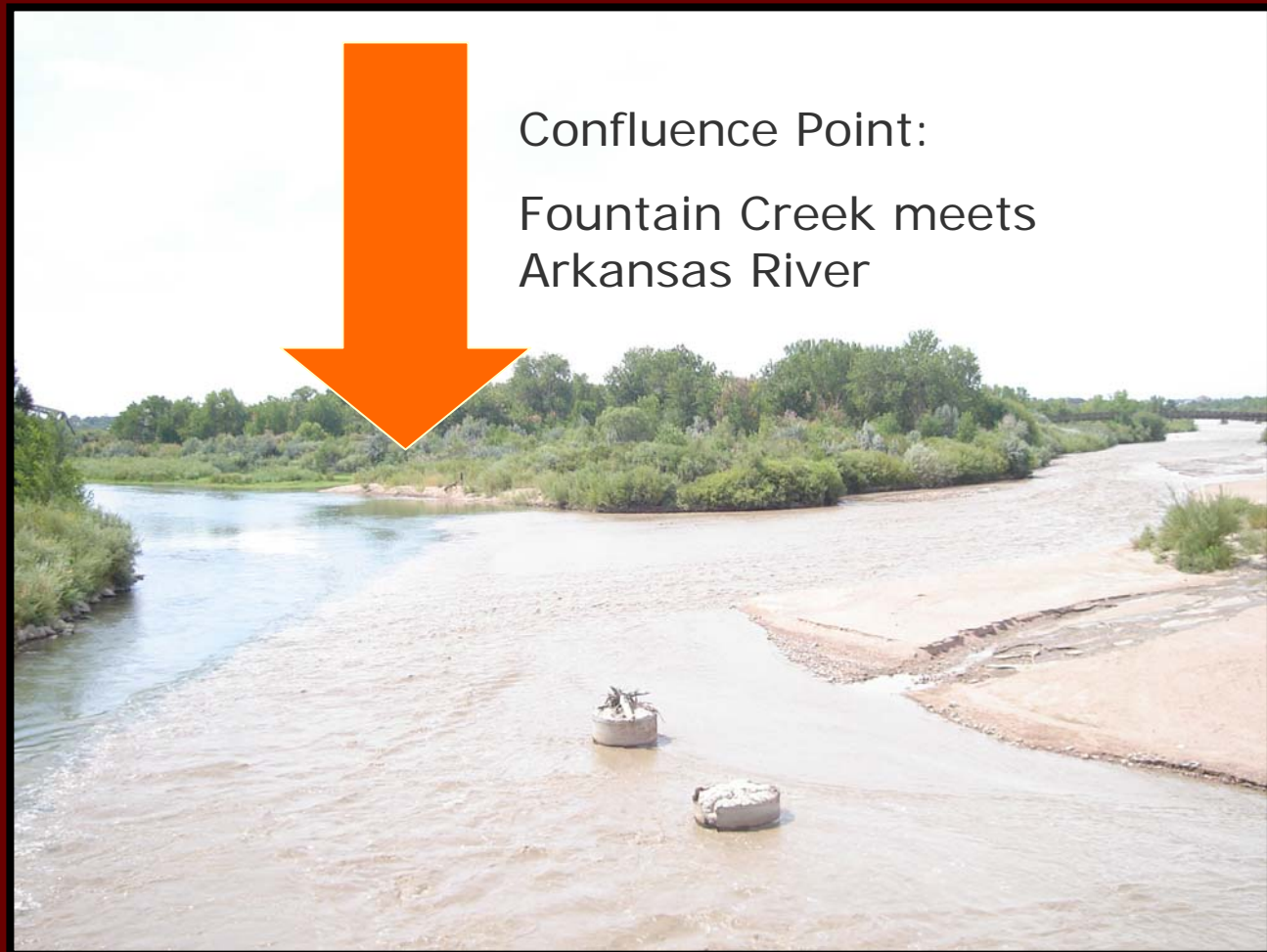
Sewage Flowing
into Fountain Creek

Fountain Creek Contamination

Fountain Creek has had 15 major spills or upsets since 1998 of sewage waste water.
(70,000,000 gals.)



Sewage Overflows from Colorado Springs Contaminate Fountain Creek



Confluence Point:

Fountain Creek meets
Arkansas River

WARNING signs at Fountain Creek



Signs posted by Pueblo City-County Health Department banning contact with water made unsafe by fecal coliform bacteria.

Dueling Billboards: The Springs and Pueblo



Taking Advantage of Current Events

- Along with other environmental hot topics in Pueblo (Exel Comanche Plant expansion, Rocky Mountain Steel, and iron & metal recycling industries), the Fountain Creek contamination has spurred dialogue about the environmental conditions in Pueblo, environmental justice, and Smart Growth
- New task forces have formed and coalitions of stakeholders have grown
- Citizens have increased communication with their City Council members and the Pueblo District Attorney's office

5. THINK LONG TERM
BE PATIENT
CELEBRATE COMMUNITY

Planning for the Future: Pueblo and Salt Creek

In 1999, this 26-acre urban waterfront restored the Arkansas River channel to its original course. Now Salt Creek is planning for its future.



Concerned people
are making the
difference



Salt Creek Short-term Goals

- Continue neighborhood watch program
- Further develop the baseball field for youth
- Establish a community garden in a cleaned-up area
- Create a community compost site

Salt Creek Long-term Goals

- Establish a community computer lab to offer skills training for residents as well as ESL courses
- Establish a community organization; neighborhood board, non-profit status
- Increase communication with local officials
- Develop a long term vision

Celebrate and Look Forward!

Salt Creek
Community
Picnic - 2006



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